

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 159

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that machine-readable privacy policies and the Platform for Privacy Preferences Project specification, commonly known as the P3P specification, are important tools in protecting the privacy of Internet users, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 7, 2001

Mr. SMITH of Washington (for himself, Mr. DOOLEY of California, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mrs. TAUSCHER, and Mr. LARSEN of Washington) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration and Government Reform, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that machine-readable privacy policies and the Platform for Privacy Preferences Project specification, commonly known as the P3P specification, are important tools in protecting the privacy of Internet users, and for other purposes.

Whereas consumers are justifiably concerned about their personal information being used by commercial, nonprofit, and government entities in our increasingly interconnected society;

Whereas Internet users, in particular, are justifiably concerned about the collection and use of their personal information when they visit sites on the World Wide Web;

Whereas providing notice to consumers as to what information will be collected and how it will be used is necessary to allow them to make informed decisions regarding the disclosure of personal information;

Whereas many online privacy policies are lengthy documents written in arcane legal language that discourages Internet users from reading and understanding the policy;

Whereas machine-readable privacy policies allow web sites to transmit information about their privacy practices in a standardized format that can be read by a web browser or other software, automatically compared to the pre-established privacy preferences of the user, and warn a user when the site's policy does not match with the user's preferences;

Whereas transparent notice of privacy practices and automated warnings of unacceptable privacy policies empowers Internet users to make fully informed choices without restricting or impeding their online activities;

Whereas such empowerment of users leads to further growth of the Internet by creating an environment of trust for Internet-based transactions and interactions;

Whereas the World Wide Web Consortium (commonly known as the W3C), the 500-member international consortium that sets interoperability standards for Internet technology, has developed a specification for machine-readable privacy policies under the auspices of the Platform for Privacy Preferences Project (commonly known as the P3P);

Whereas P3P-enabled web browsers will be available to Internet users in 2001, and software for generating P3P-compliant privacy policies is already available;

Whereas the voluntary development and implementation by private consortiums and companies of the P3P specification and other privacy-enhancing technologies is an important step in protecting the privacy of Internet users and promoting the future growth of the Internet; and

Whereas the success of the P3P specification depends on the widespread adoption and deployment of machine-readable privacy policies: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

3 (1) machine-readable privacy policies and the
4 Platform for Privacy Preferences Project specification
5 (commonly known as the P3P specification) are
6 important tools in protecting the privacy of Internet
7 users;

8 (2) commercial and nonprofit web site operators
9 should deploy P3P-compliant privacy policies on
10 their web sites as soon as possible;

11 (3) Members of Congress should deploy P3P-
12 compliant privacy policies on their official web sites
13 and on any unofficial or campaign-related web sites;

14 (4) each office of Congress should deploy P3P-
15 compliant privacy policies on any web site under the
16 control of such office;

1 (5) the President should encourage each execu-
2 tive department and agency to deploy P3P-compliant
3 privacy policies on any web site under the control of
4 such department or agency;

5 (6) any legislation relating to online privacy
6 should take into consideration the terminology of the
7 P3P specification and should recognize P3P-compli-
8 ant policies as a means for providing Internet users
9 with notice regarding online privacy policies;

10 (7) the public and private sectors should under-
11 take efforts to educate Internet users about using
12 the P3P specification to make informed privacy deci-
13 sions; and

14 (8) commercial developers of software for Inter-
15 net browsers and other privacy-enhancing tech-
16 nologies that use the P3P specification should con-
17 tinue their development efforts to fully implement
18 the specification in order to give Internet users the
19 greatest possible control over their online privacy.

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